DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 035 921 CG 004 927

AUTHOR GAYLIN, NED L.
TITLE THE WOODSTOCK GENERATION; FRANKENSTEIN OR GOLEM.
INSTITUTION NATIONAL INST. OF MENTAL HEALTH (DHEW), CHEVY CHASE, MD. CENTER FOR STUDIES OF CHILD AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH.
PUB DATE 23 OCT 69
NOTE 19P.; PAPER PRESENTED AT NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS CONVENTION, WASHINGTON, D. C., OCTOBER 23-24, 1969

EDRS PRICE EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.05
DESCRIPTORS *ACTIVISM, ADOLESCENCE, COMMUNICATION (THOUGHT TRANSFER), RESPONSIBILITY, ROLE PERCEPTION, *SOCIAL FACTORS, *STUDENT ALIENATION, STUDENTS, *VALUES, *YOUTH

ABSTRACT

TODAY'S YOUTH IS DEMANDING TO BE HEARD IN A WAY THAT FEW OTHER YOUTH GENERATIONS HAVE BEFORE. THE EXPERTS TRY TO EXPLAIN THIS PHENOMENON AND IN GENERAL, THEIR EXPLANATIONS ARE THE SAME, A PUT DOWN OF OUR YOUTH. SOME OF THE GENERAL SOCIETAL FORCES WHICH HAVE LED TO THIS SITUATION DESERVE SOME MENTION: (1) THE EXTENSION OF ADOLESCENCE, YET DURING THIS PERIOD A DEMAND FOR RESPONSIBILITY WITH LITTLE OR NO EXPERIENCES OR OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE IT; (2) A DEMAND FOR CREDENTIALS BUT LITTLE RESPECT FOR WHAT FEW THEY HAVE; (3) THE CONTINUAL EROSION AND DISENFRANCHISING OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE AMERICAN FAMILY UNIT FROM ITS TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES; (4) CHANGING ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS; (5) THE PRESENCE OF "THE BOMB"; (6) THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THINK FOR ONESELF RATHER THAN BLIND OBEISANCE; (7) HYPOCRICY; (8) THE RIDICULOUS RITES OF PASSAGE, DRIVE AT 16, BE DRAFTED AT 18, VOTE AT 21; (9) A LACK OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT, AND FEELINGS OF GROUP SOLIDARITY. PERHAPS THE BEHAVIOR THAT ADULTS BECOME SO INDIGNANT ABOUT IS AN ATTEMPT TO FIND SOME STANDARD, SOME VALUE, AND SOME COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS. (KJ)

ED035921

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE WOODSTOCK GENERATION -- FRANKENSTEIN OR GOLEM

Ned L. Gaylin, Ph.D.
Consultant
Section on Youth and Student Affairs
Center for Studies of Child and Family Mental Health
National Institute of Mental Health
Chevy Chase, Maryland

For presentation as the plenary address at
The Annual Meeting of the National Council on Family Relations
Washington, D. C.
October 23, 1969

CG 004927

THE WOODSTOCK GENERATION - FRANKENSTEIN OR GOLEM

American society has created, through the worship of technocracy and assembly line efficiency on the one hand, and the idolization but lack of respect for its young people on the other hand, a kind of giant generational Juggernaut. Whether it turns out to be a destructive Frankenstein or a savior Golem is now the subject of often frantic inquiry and heated debate. Some of the forces which brought it into being might indeed shed some light on its nature and the direction of its movement.

Despite our reputation as a young and iconoclastic nation--we are basically a nation of idolators. We delight in worship and idolize the pursuit of knowledge, we revere expertise, we adore our young, we exalt the dollar--but in the process we often do not understand that to which we pay so much homage.

We, as a nation, look to experts for information, advice, and guidance on how to raise our children. Parents of the 30's and early 40's looked to Gessell...in the 40's and 50's it was Spock--the 60's and 70's are still somewhat open for grabs, but there's always someone to fill the role, be it a Bettleheim, Ginott, a Kenniston, or whoever.

In part, this willingness to follow the advice of some expert seems due to our somewhat different though similar worship of our young--not so much as individuals and potential people, but as commodities. We dress them, coddle them, educate them and brandish them, much in the same way we groom our homes and lawns. We cherish them, but only when they conform to our image of what they should be. Rarely do we treat them as individuals with rights and privileges as well as responsibilities.

As our population grows younger and younger (the mean age of our citizenry is now approximately 27 and by 1972 it is projected that more than half the population will be under 25) we have to face the fact that we are not addressing a small minority group, but indeed talking to and with the bulk of our nation's people. And this majority is becoming less and less silent.

Today's youth is demanding to be heard in a way that few other youth generations have before. It has said, "We will speak and you will listen--or else." During the period of chagrin--the period before righteous indignation and retaliation (i.e., "putting the punks in their place") has set in--we, the experts, the social and behavioral scientists try to explain the phenomenon. We promulgate theories in abundance (almost as many as those of us studying the behavior). And with few exceptions our literature tends, by the process of generalization and subtle patronization to minimize, or at best detract from the dignity of these young people, their individuality, their goals, aims, etc. We socialanalyze them.

Often we even talk of their positive idealistic attitudes but in such a way as to minimize their validity--i.e., the idealism of youth. And by that we generally refer to the unworkability of altruistic goals in our very practically oriented world. The results are always the same--a put down of our youth.

The ploys are numerous: one being I agree with your goals but not your methods--then proving that if the methods are egregious how can the goals really be meritorious. Another is to ask the dissenters with what would they replace the structures of which they are so critical, then

to smile patronizingly when answers are halting or obviously unsophisticated and unworkable. (The latter is most popular on college campuses and is tantamount to asking one who is starving and screaming for food to delineate an appropriate program of vitamin therapy to assuage his hunger pains.) A variation on this theme is to admit the cogency of the complaints, but then, when the dissidents suggest a voice in the decision-making process, to indicate their lack of qualifications on some basis or another (youth, inexperience, lack of knowledge of all the contingencies, etc.).

These are some of the ways we deal with those of our young who confront the system most openly--those young people who believe that it is their duty and obligation to work for meaningful social change through the mechanisms of free discussion and action. For the other group--the opt outs--there are other ploys--the primary one being the hassle (through action and media). These include the jokes in magazines and newspapers about long hair and mode of dress. The ploys are different but the same end results are aimed for--minimizing respect and dignity for nonconformity and individuality--maximizing the power of the assembly line sameness and conformity to standards of at best dubious merit.

The problems which have brought us to this era of confrontation are complex and manifold. I am not so ambitious to even attempt their delineation here, but some of the general societal forces which have led to this apparent stalemate deserve some mention. One of the most prevalent of these has been the extension of adolescence which has been increasing in direct correlation with our augmentingly diverse technologically sophisticated society.

Youth is no longer a biological entity in the sense that it was even a few decades ago, but is better defined primarily by psychosocial parameters. The "under-thirty" and "over-thirty" generation refers less to an age group than to a cultural ethos. At twenty-five many of our fathers were well into their career lines raising families. Thirty, the age at which many of our present professionals are just getting started, was then near the onset of middle age just a few generations ago. We have stretched the apprentice years to the extreme, and are pushing that with talk of post-doctoral and post-post doctoral training.

Furthermore, in the past the apprentice--although in junior status--had the attention and respect of his adult mentor. Indeed, it was recognized that without adequate apprenticeships the guilds would have no one to carry on the skills of society effectively. The apprentices were recognized as future guildsmen--and to be apprenticed to a master carried honor and responsibility. They were not second class citizens and their potential to surpass their masters was a source of pride and an augmentation to the craft that was considered to their master's credit. Promise and responsibility was encouraged from the outset. And the young apprentice often became a member of his master's family--groomed to take over.

The situation in America today is almost the reverse. Our society requires credentials before it confers status or respect. We offer little opportunity for our youth to experience directly what taking on of responsibility is and then (what's worse) question their lack of it. Industry and government may offer menial positions to youth (often as a filler during the summer months) but this is recognized as little more than tokenism and the jobs carry little in the way of responsibility--let alone respect.

Ruth Benedict identified and labelled this phenomenon "discontinuities of cultural conditioning" some thirty years ago. She referred to the disparities in the way we expect our children (after a sterilized and protected upbringing) to be mature responsible and sexually responsive spouses and parents. Not only has little been done to de-escalate the process in the three decades since she first discussed it, but indeed we have extended it to other areas--particularly institutionalized education and training.

The Universities (or the "multiversities" into which they are developing) as the seats of such training (and the subtle shift has been away from education and towards training) are natural whipping boys for the dissatisfaction of modern youth. Furthermore, they are viewed by their charges as double-binding on many counts. One of the major criticisms is that our institutions of higher learning espouse American humanitarian ideals while at the same time participate in many of the social inequities of which their faculties are so often critical.

Instead of viewing universities as training grounds for future thoughtful, concerned, and actively involved citizens, students view universities as perpetuating the inequities of "the system" by becoming primarily credentialing agencies for society. And the behavioral scientists, while observing this, have been little better off in changing the tide by way of offering practical solutions--a factor which leaves them too without credibility among today's youth.

At the same time that our adult training institutions are protracting the training-credentialing years on the one end of the continuum, other of our institutions are concerned about extending it in the other direction

and Head Start is being extended downward. Not that Head Start or nursery schools are, in and of themselves bad, but the effects of the extension of institutionalized education upwards and downwards aggravates the consistent trend of modern American society. That is, the continual erosion and disenfranchising of the community and the American family unit from its training and educational responsibilities.

While American youth is reared to leave the family of orientation, there is little offered in the way of emotionally supportive institutions to replace the emotional ties, solidarity, and security that were once functions of the family.

When universities began questioning their role as in loco parentis they were freeing themselves from a societal hypocrisy. They never could really meet the functional needs of youth that parents and extended families of the past did--only the structural--that of laying down the law about that which their wards could or could not do. To a lesser degree the same thing is now happening on high school campuses. The questioning of stringent dress codes, the as yet minimal though subtle shifts in disciplinary action, etc. are all reflections of this trend.

Yet there is a growing hiatus created. For years now the educational and behavioral experts have encouraged parents to allow those better trained in the field of child rearing to guide them. With the continued isolation of nuclear families from extended family ties, from the advice and counsel of their own parents and siblings with greater experience (and our continued emphasis on independence) American parents, have by and large looked eagerly to such counsel from those "well trained" in the area.

We have even developed institutional structures attempting to bridge this gap. One of the more publicized is the YMCA Indian guide program, which attempts to bring fathers and young soms together in a manner similar to that of the past. But, the dissatisfactions of such programs are apparent. They are bridges to a past that do not fit with the needs of the present. They furthermore, are an extension of enforcing expertise of the professional worker into the family structure. They schedule time for the father-son relationship and enforce an ethos "Pals Forever" which often conflicts with the societal and familial patterns. Yet the popularity of such programs certainly points to the need that parents today feel for help in relating meaningfully to their offspring.

Thus the American parent, and consequently the American family has been trained by society to remain independent of its extended family ties, to remain in comparative isolation as a unit and to groom its children for leaving the nest in order to increase its social and physical mobility. All of this has had the effect of a reliance on the guidance and advice of experts and specialists, very often of a nonpresent nature. That is, we turn to books on child rearing, periodicals, and upon social agencies. The popularity of such cookbooks as, Between Parent and Child, How to Live with Your Teenager, How to Increase Your Child's Intelligence, etc., etc., is evidence of this trend and child guidance clinics have waiting lists six months to a year long.

Lloyd Warner, the popular American Anthropologist, has said the American family must lose its children in order to regain them--and we follow his advice with a vengeance. We train them to get out of the house

from the moment they can walk--and where they can't walk--mother or father drive them. We are all familiar with the popular jokes about the suburban housewife's major role as chauffer so that the second car is less a luxury than a necessity. Despite the increase in homeowning and the necessary inclusion of a family room, less and less American family life is spent in the home. We are outward bound and upwardly mobile--and we do it more and more on the road.

All of these forces have had secondary effects. The roles of fathers and mothers have changed. Talcott Parsons' analysis of the family of two decades ago with the emphasis upon the instrumental functions of the male and emotiono-supportive functions of the female no longer looks so clean and neat. Fathers are characterized as more maternal and mothers as more involved with the outside world, and our stereotypes and role models have changed--often to the confusion of everyone involved. But television--our vigilant teacher--conveys the new images with vivid clarity and in living color.

And that brings us to the children of this not-so-brave new world. The World War II parents and children were well trained to follow instructions. We dutifully saved tin cans and aluminum foil, grew our victory gardens and used our food and gas stamps. We would certainly never have thought of bending, folding, stapling, or mutilating anything, except that which society told us to. Why? We're not sure--but the consequences would, or might be dire. We rarely question the machines that are more and more beginning to run our lives. We may be harassed by them, by the continual mistakes in our accounts, and the misdirection of our lives--yet somehow we have faith in their ultimate efficiency and correctness.

Not so our young who have been raised with these same machines--and the perhaps ultimate machine--the Bomb, and with the Bomb the threat of a no future. Science fiction is not escape to them as it used to be to many of us--not when Wells, Verne, Huxley and Bradburry have proven so efficiently prophetic. As Jeff Nutall, in a most incisive book about the generations points out, the humanitarian idealism which pulled us through the first and second World Wars was effectively caboshed by our actions at Hiroshima and the threat of a no-future world. He thus dubs our present generation "the Bomb Culture" and marks its differentiation between those of us who reached adolescence before Hiroshima, and those after.

These too are the "Children of Nuremberg." It is we who have told them that there is no excuse for blind obeisance--that one must search one's own conscience. We have told them that love of mankind transcends allegiance to country. We told them this before the world in 1945 at the Nuremberg trials, while 25 years later we are indignant when they question our motives--calling it a lack of respect for wisdom and experience. And that's just the beginning of our hypocrisy.

We are shocked at this generation's casual use of drugs and their easy morals--yet ignore the fact that divorce and adult alcoholism are on the rise. We are indignant at their lack of respect for authority while our papers perpetually tell the story of vice and graft in our most respected government institutions.

So we have double bound them continually--we have said, "Stand on your own two feet and be a man--but not until you are 21 or more." We have made a mishmash out of our rites of passage. At 16 you can drive, at 18 you can get drafted, at 21 you can vote, etc., etc. And we can't understand their wanting to chuck it all and create a world of their own.

Too, these are the "Children of the Lonely Crowd." They have been raised in essentially non-community communities, where carbon copy anonymity is the order of the day. There is no longer a spirit of neighborhood--they are rather places from which to go to work, or to school, or to women's clubs, etc. And as these communities grow larger and larger, and along with them our schools, and universities, they become more like horizontal highrises. Anonymity increases. The quest for privacy becomes almost obsessional and the result is isolation and a growing sense of anomy. The young associate--the old withdraw. We become Johnny's father and Sally's mother to one another. And we shake our heads when we see other children playing with matches rather than taking time to reprimand them. That is, we say--these are not our children, and we have not the right to castigate them just as we don't expect our neighbors to reprimand our own children for their behavior. How often I have stopped my car in front of kids running across the street to tell them to watch before they do so--only to be told (more or less) to "mind your business--you're not my father."

Only at rare moments today does our sense of community return. These are usually at times of stress. I recall with great nostalgia the blizzard in Chicago in 1967. We were all snowbound. The streets were impassable, most of the stores were closed because of lack of deliveries, and we were all home from work. There was little to do away from home. We were all out on the street, walking to the one open drugstore, walking in the middle of the street, laughing, chatting with one another. There was a kind of party atmosphere, and few seemed to mind the inconvenience.

We helped each other dig our cars out. I met people who lived across the street and next door whom I had never seen before. We shared milk and bread, pooled resources, and became a community. Yet just days later those bonds ceased to exist--we returned to business as usual.

Our high schools and colleges were once small enough to retain a sense of community. But these too, are becoming large and impersonal. If you see the same person in more than one or two classes it is unusual. But somehow our youth have gotten a taste of closeness and the intimacy of the group and have countered. In the many visits I have made in the past year to troubled campuses I have been reminded of the big snow in Chicago. At the demonstrations and sit-ins I have sensed the same esprit, the same feeling of closeness and intimacy. And I have often wondered, if the popularity of such protests and the ease with which they are instigated, is not in part related to the phenomenon of a shared experience and a sense of group. I wondered that too last week at the base of the Washington Monument.

So too, then, these have become more recently the "Alice's Restaurant" and the "Woodstock Generation"...the not so "Easy Riders." We have trained them to leave home--not to be dependent upon their parents. We have shown them this in word and deed by our rejection of our community and extended family ties and lack of reliance on our own parents. We have pushed them out of the house and wonder at their not returning home. And they have learned their lessons well. They have said to us, "If you can't trust those who brought you into the world and raised you, in whom can you put stock? Those experts who profit from writing books about childrearing--Why they, better than you?"

This is the T.V. era and our youth from birth on have been glutted by the various media men and know well that brand X is really no better or worse than any other brand. They are cynics with regard to both the media and the message. Who then is there left--who but themselves? And if our parents and their parents have not vouchsafed a future for them, what is left--nothing but the present--the here and now. And when we ask the questions asked of youth--why drugs, why protest, why loose morals (if indeed they are) why are we shocked when we get a flip response such as, "When you know you're on the Titanic, you might as well travel first class."

Thus the young have recognized that they are a generation unto themselves. They have begun creating horizontal structures to fill the gap of the vertical ones that we have systematically destroyed. If there are no parents and grandparents who have the experience to cope with their times--who can guide them--who but themselves can they turn to? We have pushed them for the greater part of their growing up to socialize and get on well in school and community--why are we so shocked when their locus of evaluation is outside the home and highly internal to themselves?

Furthermore, when we accuse them of aimlessness--of a lack of cohesion--of being "bums"--they recognized their needs and society's lack and began building and organizing structures on the horizontal plane. The rapid popularity of encounter techniques, communal groups, experimental colleges, unionization for causes, runaway houses--have all been the result. These structures have more than just horizontality in common with each other, they all attempt to build in an adience towards honesty and intimacy and the communication thereof.

This generation is less uptight about words such as love. What decent, self-respecting, red-blooded American teenage boy could talk with such casualness about love and loving a generation ago without being thought, if nothing else a little odd--or at best a poet? The more traditional media is continually knocking the unisex motion, and the ease with which our male and female teenagers feel free to share clothes, hair styles, and morality. We have allowed boys to be more sensitive and girls to be more ambitious. We have encouraged this in the way we raised our children. Fathers diapered their daughters and mothers drove their sons to baseball games--why are we shocked at their comfort with a more flexible role structure? Even more, why have we not questioned the possibility that this is a change we have wrought (albeit perhaps not knowingly) that might be a potentially positive one.

Now I am not so enamoured of modern youth to be convinced that all of the answers are on their lips and that they are all pure of heart and noble of deed. But I am firmly convinced that all of their actions--the protests, the pleas for relevance are <u>not</u> as many of their critics would have us believe, the actions of a hooligan minority which has managed to bamboozle an overly maleable, and somewhat zealous congregate of immature organisms.

And I am truly impressed with the events at Woodstock, where over 300,000 young people gathered together under most trying conditions--limited food and facilities, impossible weather--with no violence. They shared, they listened, they loved. Yes they smoked pot, and they wore crazy get-ups, or no clothes at all, yes they made love--but they didn't make war--on each other or anyone else. And those who came to condemn and to criticize were impressed. The police, the town, and even the nation

were seduced by these kids. The media looked on with admiration, respect, and in some cases awe.

I am most impressed with the hundreds of thousands of young people all over the country--who, with sincerity and calm conviction, organized themselves and others into national candlelight parades to tell the world that they did not believe in war. And I for one was proud to follow their lead. Certainly our youth have begun to take hold of a spirit of community--in an even larger sense than we ever dreamed, and rediscover a sense of humanness, the loss of which we have been preaching about for 2,000 years.

And these are but dramatic representative events of what is taking place every day. One cannot deny the sense of commitment one sees when talking to the young people who have established communes, free universities, high school educational reform groups. And after being with these young people, I keep wondering what the communication gap is all about. Certainly I keep asking myself, no parent wants a bad or even mediocre education for his child. Certainly no mother or father, but possibly a disturbed one, wants to see his child hit over the head by police, or spend precious years of his youth in a prison.

The only answers that keep returning are that we as adults are negotiating out of fear--fear that what is not relevant in our children's lives is not so much their education, but ourselves. Fear that, although generation gaps have existed throughout history, the velocity of societal and technological change has made a hiatus so large that it can never be closed. And in a way, if we continue, I suppose this is my fear too. With continued and augmenting horizontality comes a heightening lack of intergenerational communication and with that further polarization and

alienation. Both youth and non-youth have worries and concerns which they are finding more and more difficult to communicate to one another. The "grown-ups" when scared begin to pontificate and hand out ultimatums--and the response on the part of youth is quick and sure resistance and withdrawal. And what Fritz Redl refers to as the "choreography of the dare" begins to unfold to its ultimate conclusion--a total stalemate with both sides frustrated and further apart.

And we, the professionals, the educators, the therapists, have done little to ameliorate the continued polarization. Our attitude has been, tell me what you have to say and I'll see how well you fit the normative mold. We listen, we process, we build theories and run multivariate factor analyses through our computers, but we do not hear. We do not really hear and understand nor do we teach others how to do so. I wonder how many of us use the word empathy (which has become so fashionable in therapeutic and educational circles) in such a perfunctory manner that we do not really define it for ourselves.

Empathy is not an easy word to define. It is not just understanding, and it certainly is not sympathy. It is not identification, but somehow the fineline between identification and understanding which includes aspects of our own experience which mesh with those of the others with whom we are talking. It is this kind of understanding that we must begin applying when we work with families and youth. We must be able to see the world through their eyes, feel it with their guts, yet remain enough ourselves to be able to indicate that we, too, are real people with feelings of our own; that these feelings are not so very different from theirs. Then communication becomes possible. Then and only then do we stand some chance

of lessening the gap between generations, between racial groups, between ourselves and the other nations of the world.

This communication must emanate and originate from the adults. The kids have been turned off by the time they have become teenagers. They have tried communicating with us from the year one. They have learned our language, they have taken our expressions, and still we do not hear them. We listen to their words, we observe their behavior, and twist them beyond recognition--so they give up trying.

I had a highly edifying experience recently at one of our local high schools. It has been my habit to visit various schools, and I thought little of accepting an invitation by a group of students to attend a meeting they had initiated with their teachers in order to try and bridge the hiatus which existed within the school. These were not radical students making demands, indeed they had rejected the alliance of radical students in the area in favor of an approach which they felt more positive. An approach which they had been told by their elders was more constructive.

They invited me, but had neglected to clear through the administration--and I having been so accustomed to being invited by various principals had neglected to sign in at the office (as one must if one is visiting a school). I came to the designated room somewhat late and discussion was underway. I sat down in an out-of-the-way corner. There was no opportunity for an introduction--no time to brandish my credentials or title. After a few moments of discussion an officious looking woman at the head of the circle asked me what I was doing there--and asked it in such a manner that I was left momentarily speechless. She didn't ask who I was, but what was I doing there. It had been years since I felt the feelings she made me feel by her demeanor. I was a child again. Divested of my title--my business

suit didn't seem to impress her--I was emotionally naked.

I apologized, and later let her lead me shuffling to the office to sign in at the desk and return to the meeting, tongue sufficiently frozen so as to do little harm. She was a taskmistress at nonverbal communication. She let me know in no uncertain terms that my place there was as an interloper, and that my opinions, feelings, perhaps even humanness were totally without portfolio. But I shall be eternally grateful to that woman, because for the rest of the meeting I could listen in a way I probably never could have before.

One after one, time and time again, I saw and heard students patronized and condescended to. When one of them made a point, I gloated to myself and thought, "Aha--we got one that time--what have you got to say to that?" only to have my hopes dashed by an irrelevant cut by another teacher such as, "If you spent more time in my French class last year rather than working on educational reforms we wouldn't need meetings like this." It was truly amazing--they had all the rhetoric and destructive impulses of a vicious district attorney in a Perry Mason Trial. It was exhausting, frustrating, and infuriating. If I had been those kids I would have wanted to kick someone or worse. Instead, I was very mature--I went back to my office and worked over my secretary.

That was the beginning of the radicalization of a liberal. I began truly understanding what the kids were talking about in a way I had only half understood before. And I began realizing how we might well be creating if we did not stop, a kind of powerful and awesome Frankenstein monster, who like the original after being rejected by his creator turned with all his fury and vengeance upon him and those around him.

We gave life, limb, and heart to this generation--true it now has a life of its own and a direction perhaps different from that which we anticipated. But if we continue turning our back to it, we may find ourselves unable to alter its course entirely, and unable to follow it as eventually we must. There is in Hasidic legend another giant creation of man--the Golem. He was created to protect his people and like Adam was created of clay. Eventually, the legend has it, his work completed--and his work was creating a world of harmony and peace--he returned to the soil from which he was created.

A generation is an amorphous thing, difficult to define. As an entity it really has no existence in time. When an infant is born he is a generation unto himself and all other age spans are defined in relation to him. When an era creates a generation and dubs it with a name (and few other youth cadres seem to have spawned more titles than the present one) it is generally because it highlights a difference between past and future.

The work of this generation is cut out for it and it will proceed. Its effects can be positive or negative. No one has the answers as to whether it be a Frankenstein or a Golem yet--whether its ghost will continue to terrify and haunt us, or whether it will be reabsorbed into the ground from which it emanated. What we do as parents and professionals in response to it still has some meaning. How much longer we can continue to alienate and frustrate it, rather than understand it and enlist its aid in creating a more hopeful future for newer generations is a pressing question.

Ned L. Gaylin, Ph.D.
CCF
10/20/69